



Landfill Surcharge Distribution HB 5558 & 5559

POSITION STATEMENT

The Michigan Recycling Coalition (MRC) urges legislators to support House Bills 5558 & 5559.

Establishing a \$7.50 surcharge on solid waste disposed in Michigan provides much needed funding to implement the state solid waste policy and bring Michigan closer to a number of state and local goals. Higher landfill tipping fees will reduce the flow of waste into Michigan. Funding will be available to support community-based recycling programs, to support business and industry and develop markets and demand for materials, as well as, fill current gaps in community budgets across Michigan.

Michigan has the lowest recycling rate of the Great Lakes states, yet even at 20% recycling the programs fuel an industry that contributes more than \$2 billion in revenue for materials processing alone and have a powerful potential for growth. With financial assistance from EPA Region 5, the MRC undertook The Recycling Measurement Project in 2000 to better understand the impact of public and private investments in recycling and composting. Findings of the project indicate that Michiganders have access to 772 curbside and drop-off recycling programs that serve 30%-43% of the population and result in the weak 20% recycling rate. We can do better and grow a viable industry that benefits Michigan's economy.

On a per-ton basis, sorting and processing recyclables alone sustain 10 times more jobs than landfilling or incineration. Recycling creates jobs, generates revenue and encourages capital investments - all of which stimulate the economy. Nationally the recycling and reuse industry is comparable to industries such as auto and truck manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, food manufacturing, and computer and electronics manufacturing in terms of employment and wages.

At the same time, recycling sustains the environment by decreasing pollution, saving energy, conserving natural resources and reducing greenhouse gases. In addition, reducing the flow of out-of-state trash into Michigan's landfills will preserve existing landfills while postponing the need to build expensive, new landfills.

With state level leadership and financial and technical assistance, Michigan can create and maintain a robust resource management infrastructure to the benefit of Michigan citizens, economy, and environment.

The Michigan Recycling Coalition is the statewide association for recycling and composting professionals. For almost thirty years the Coalition has represented many facets of the diverse industry. The MRC works to:

- Provide education, training and networking opportunities to recycling professionals
- Attract, expand and support recycling and composting processing and manufacturing in Michigan
- Provide leadership, training, tools and resources to recycling and composting service providers
- Increase the use of recycled materials in end-products
- Develop and deliver consistent educational messages across the state